



*Senator Eide's Week in Review
February 21-25*

In the Spotlight:

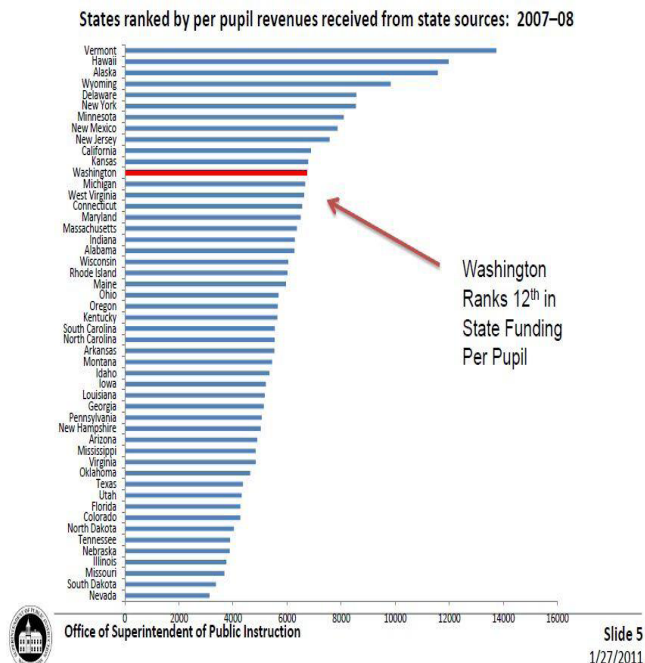
K-12 and Higher Education Funding

I've said before, and I continue to maintain, education is key to our economic development and the future successes of our youth. Whether for K-12 education, post-secondary, or work force training and re-training, funding for education is a vital public service.

K-12 Education

Approximately one million students attend Washington's public K-12 schools. Funding their education is a massive and complicated endeavor. In fact, Washington is unique in that the "paramount duty" of the state, by Constitution, is providing basic education.

Washington is ranked 12th in the nation for the amount of funding schools receive from the state.



K-12 and Higher Education Funding

Legislative Update

PTA Focus Day

WA State Budget Update

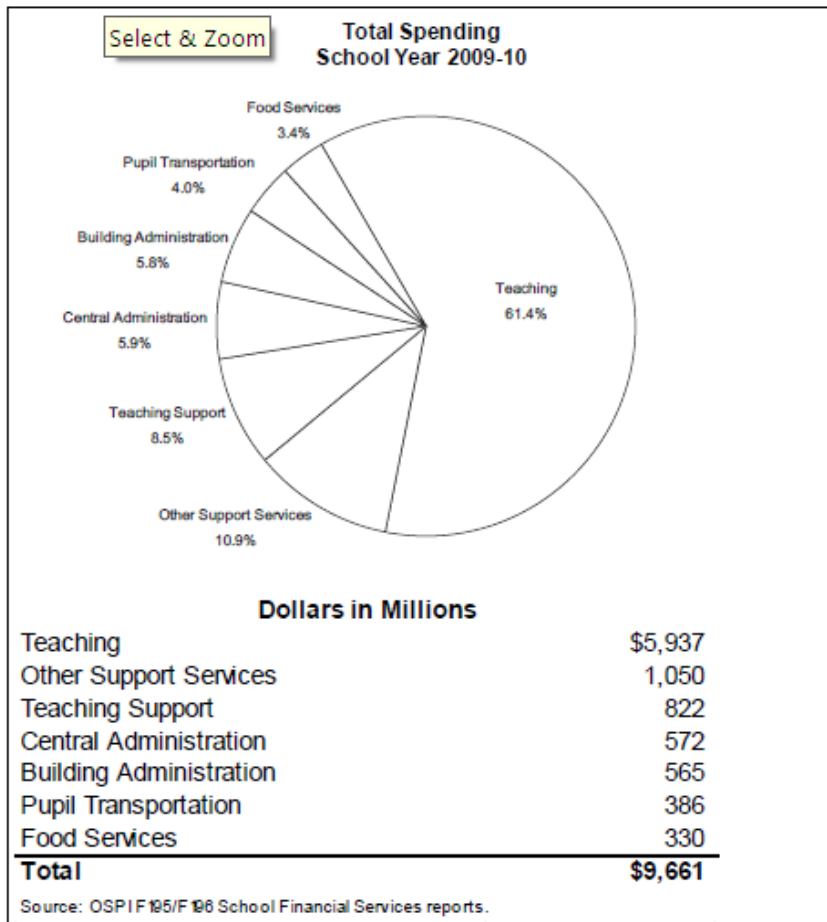
This Week's Visitors

Contact Information:

Olympia Office:
305 Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504-0430

Phone: (360) 786-7658

Below is a chart that shows how schools use funding. For more information, please see the [2011 Citizen's Guide to the Washington State K-12 Finance](#).



Toll-free legislative hotline:
1-800-562-6000

TTY/TDD Hearing impaired
hotline: 1-800-635-9993

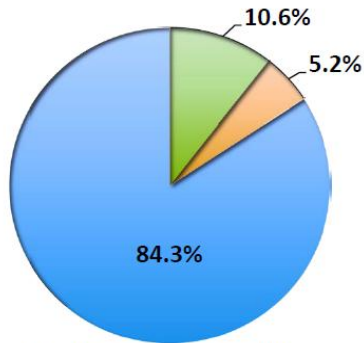
E-mail:
tracey.eide@leg.wa.gov

Web site:
<http://senatedemocrats.wa.gov/senators/eide>

Higher Education

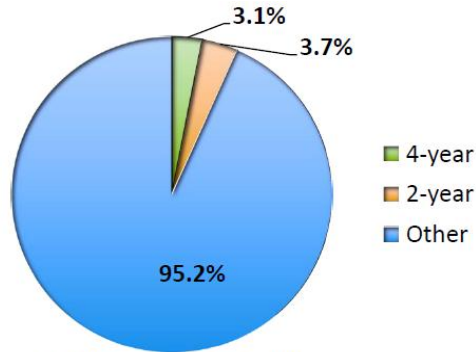
Currently, Washington has nearly 400,000 students enrolled in 6 public 4-year universities and 35 community or technical colleges. It is estimated that soon nearly 60% of jobs in Washington will require a post-secondary degree of some sort. Washington is leading the way, ranked #1 nationally, in degree completion of enrolled students, but unfortunately we rank 40th in degrees per capita. Our universities and community colleges are world-class, but the price of tuition is growing out the reach of many students. Nearly a quarter of all students who qualify for the State Need Grant are un-served. In 2009-10, 80% of the un-served students had family incomes below 50% of the Median Family Income. The following graphs show how state support for higher education has decreased significantly for 4-year and 2-year schools respectively.

1987-89 Operating Budget



Total Budget \$10.17 Billion

2011-13 Operating Budget



Total Budget \$32.12 Billion

Sources: LEAP & OFM

In addition, tuition rate increases have exceeded the increase of income and inflation rates. We are working hard this session to keep higher education accessible and affordable for all students.

Despite increasing challenges, our students are still improving and succeeding. There is so much our schools are doing that we can be proud of! Math and reading test scores continue to rise. There are many programs that are working and it is important to continue our focus on what is working in education; early learning, improving teacher effectiveness, lowering student/teacher ratio and improving STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) pathways.

Legislative Update:

We have now passed the first legislative “cut-off” for policy bills. This means that bills that have not passed out of their original policy committees will no longer be considered this session, but can be discussed again next year. Friday, February 25 marks the “cut-off” for all proposed legislation being heard in the Ways and Means or Transportation Committees. The next two weeks will be very exciting because we will be debating bills before the full Senate. Here’s an update on legislation I’ve been working on that effects the 30th District:

[SB 5036](#): The legislation I’m working on to extend funding for the Department of Ecology account to manage and control excessive sea lettuce beyond the sunset date of June 30, 2012 passed out of the Senate on Tuesday. This legislation is important for preventing an over abundant growth of "sea lettuce" in the Dumas Bay area off of Federal Way. The sea lettuce can cause environmental damage to Puget Sound when explosive growth occurs. Decomposition of the vegetative mass lets off hydrogen sulfide gas that can cause headaches, dizziness, and nausea for hundreds of residents.

[SB 5318](#): The Office of Regulatory Assistance provides valuable support to help businesses address overlapping authority, duplications and conflicts in environmental permits. This agency serves the public while eliminating waste from the legislative system. This bill to retain the Office of Regulatory Assistance was passed out of the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Trade and Innovation and is now waiting to be voted on in the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

[SB 5504](#): This is the Colby Thompson Bill of 2011, named after an infant who was abused in an unlicensed child care facility. This bill has moves Washington one step closer to ensuring that our children are in the hands of educated, competent care providers. The Colby Thompson Bill is now in the Senate Rules Committee, the final step before being heard before the full Senate.

[SB 5674](#): A recent report to the legislature found that despite our state’s current economic downturn, the aerospace industry created 1700 new jobs in the past few months. The problem now is finding ably trained technicians for those positions. This legislation will assist in training works to fill many of these living wage high demand aerospace positions. It does so through the creation of an aerospace student loan program and now stands eligible to be voted on by the Senate. The [award of the Boeing tanker contract](#) alongside our already growing aerospace industry highlight the need for this legislation. Without increasing training opportunities and enrollment, aerospace companies will be forced to import labor into Washington. When the unemployment rate continues to hover around nine percent, we simply cannot afford to let this opportunity pass by.

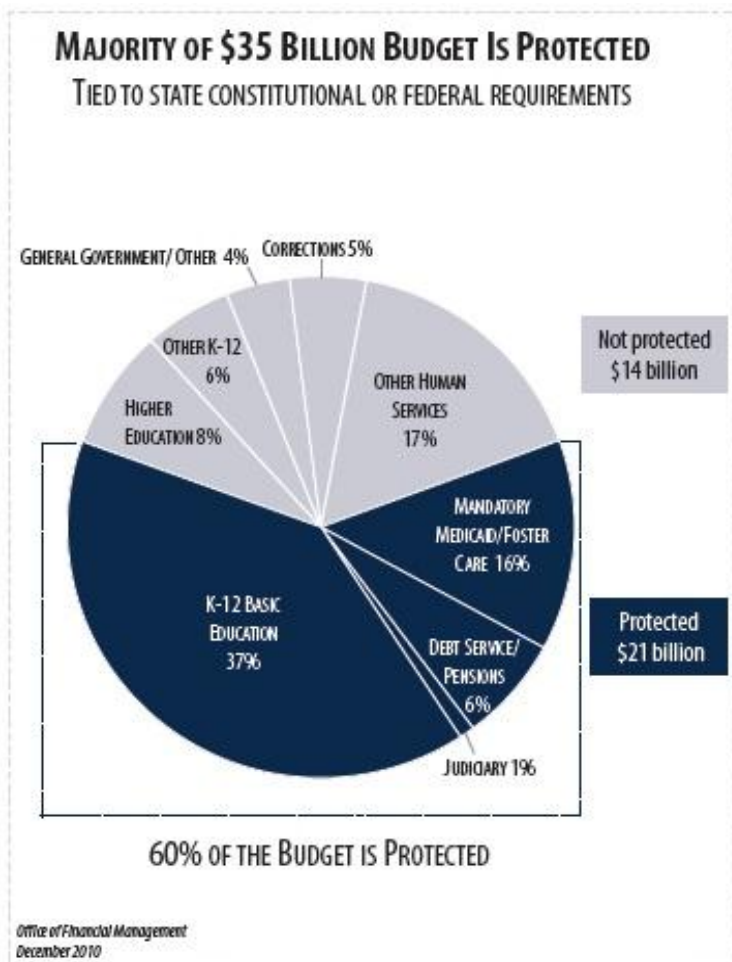


[SB 5847](#): As we continue to move more people and more products by the railroads, the safety of railway employees becomes an increased concern. This bill would help railways provide safety precautions for workers around walkways and at crossways. A public hearing was held in the Senate Transportation Committee on Thursday.

[HB 1716](#): This bill, to reduce home burglaries, is now eligible to be brought before the full body in the House of Representatives. Representative Asay and I will continue to refine this legislation as it moves through the House of Representatives and the Senate to ensure that families and their property are both protected under the law.

Parent-Teacher Association Focus Day:

On Presidents' Day, parents, teachers and students from the 30th District and across Washington took advantage of a day off from school to come to Olympia. The Washington State PTA held its annual Focus Day on the Capitol Campus Monday to draw our attention to education funding. Keeping budget cuts from harming our children and their education is a top priority for the PTA and continues to be my top priority as I serve on the Education Committee. Volunteering in my children's, Joanna and Matthew, schools as a PTA mom is one of my fondest memories.



Washington State Budget Update:

This year, legislators are faced with the difficult task of crafting the state budget for the 2011-13 biennium. In the last two years the Governor and the legislature have cut \$12 billion from the state budget—and this year it looks like we will have to cut \$5 billion more.

Last session the legislature passed a limited tax package of \$761 million to fund critical education, health care and social service programs. Last year, I voted for this revenue package because I am a strong supporter of our schools, ensuring children and families have access to health care as well as helping those in great need. Last November, Washington and 30th District voters overwhelmingly passed Initiative 1107 (two out of every three voters) and in doing so eliminated the \$761 million that funded so many needed programs. Voters state-wide and in the 30th District also passed Initiative 1053 that requires a two-thirds majority to close tax loopholes or increase revenue. I have heard and received your message loud and clear.

As the economic recession continues, the legislature is facing yet another shortfall: \$5 billion. Of Washington's \$35 billion budget, 60% is protected by Constitutional or federal requirements. That means we have \$14 billion from which we must cut \$5 billion. This area is made up of human services such as health care and job training, corrections and prisons, higher education and various critical K-12 programs. Governor Chris Gregoire has already released her budget proposal and the Senate and House of Representatives are hard at work crafting their own versions. This will undoubtedly be a long and painful process for everyone; the Senate will release its budget in mid-March.

I am deeply concerned that vital and valued services will be cut. Many of these are public services that I took office to protect—like public education, public safety and health care. But, we are faced with a stark reality and have few options to choose from. As the coming weeks unfold, I will be sure to stay in constant communication to keep you updated on our progress.

This Week's Visitors from the 30th District:

If you are ever in Olympia and are from the 30th District, please visit my office: Legislative Building 305. I would love to see you!

- *Christopher Newcombe; WSU student
- *Pat Montgomery and family
- *Dave Miller
- *Federal Way Public Schools Board President Tony Moore and Josh Garcia
- *Arla Dawn Cole and "Little Sister" Brianna; Big Brothers-Big Sisters
- *Larry Jackson, Tim Burns and Roger Flygare; 30th District Democrats
- *Dahabo Guyo; Working Connections child care
- *Gilda Turner, Marla Osuna, Jeaneen Bougard, Juanita Roberts, Mayra and Jorge Malacom; SEIU Local 925
- *Jason Brooks, Jenny Mack, Stuart Brown, and Erin Doss
- *Sarah Bright; UFCW Local 21
- *Karin Wright
- *Federal Way Councilmember Jeanne Burbidge
- *Rick Hoffman and David Baine; SPEEA IFPTE Local 2001
- *Larry Jackson



Senator Eide with members of UFCW Local 21